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better state, and may even enjoy the prospect of the "noble and insatiable torment" which leads us to pursue an ideal, even though that ideal can never be realized in its entirety.

It is to be hoped that the appearance of the next volume of this helpful and very suggestive study may not be long delayed.

JEREMIAH W. JENKS.

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A Short History of British Colonial Policy. By HUGH EDWARD EGERTON. Pp. xv, 503. Price, 12s. 6d. London: Methuen & Co., 1897.

There are few fields of historical research which offer such opportunities to the investigator as the colonial policy of Great Britain. Three sciences, history, economics, and politics unite in a theme which possesses both historical interest and present importance; indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the problems connected with her colonial policy are those of most vital importance to Great Britain at the present time. The history of British colonial policy is a subject as difficult as important. The territory which the historian is obliged to cover is large, and is full of paths that lead to many contiguous domains of closely related subjects. The literature, both primary and secondary, to be mastered, is extensive, and the successful treatment of the subject requires a rigid exercise of the powers of exclusion on the part of the author. Mr. Egerton has done his work well. He has kept to his subject, and has produced a well-balanced book written in a tone of commendable fairness.

The author divides his subject into five parts. The first division deals with the period of beginnings and ends with 1651, when the first navigation act was passed. The second part, covering the time from 1651 to 1831, is called the period of trade ascendancy. This was the period when the colonies were regarded as though they existed for the benefit of the commerce of the mother country, the period of the dominance of the mercantile system in political thought. The third division of the volume treats the time from 1830 to 1860, "the period of systematic colonization and of the granting of responsible government," "wherein a genuine attempt was at least partially made to develop colonization on some sort of scientific principles." The fourth section of the book covers the period extending from 1861 to 1885, which marked the zenith and decline of *laissez-aller* principles. The last section of the volume, in which the years since 1885 are considered, deals with the period

of *greater* Britain, a period characterized by the growth of a new spirit. "This new spirit shows itself, in the case of the self-governing colonies, on the side of the mother country in a deepened sense of their value and of their claims; on the side of the colonies in a wider imperial patriotism, and in a more serious recognition of the difficulties entailed upon the mother country by her European and imperial responsibilities."

Students of American history will be especially interested in the admirably fair and judicial treatment of the relations of Great Britain with her American colonies. The author's impartial analysis brings out clearly the mistakes of the British policy that resulted in the separation of the colonies from the mother country. Especial emphasis is laid on the influence which the weakness of the executive part of the government that England established in the colonies had in bringing about the overthrow of British rule. The conclusions of the author regarding the failure of the British government in the American colonies are so suggestive as to merit quotation: "It is a strange irony," he says (page 133), "which has fastened the epithet tyrannical on the conduct of England toward her colonies. Incapable, weak, causing the maximum of friction with the minimum of result, colonial policy may have been, but to call it tyrannical is to travesty either language or facts. The situation, perhaps, admits of a general reflection. The government of the colonies, as the government of the mother country before the complete evolution of party government, may be defined as one possessing representative institutions but not responsible government. Now it may be safely affirmed that of all governments such a one is the most difficult to carry on. Order is possible under absolutism and under popular government. But the *tertium quid*, which confers power while refusing responsibility, generally, and we may almost say, inevitably results in anarchy. In England such logical issue was avoided by the organized employment of bribes, and by the defective character of parliament, from a representative point of view; but the colonial assemblies were not of sufficient importance to be sought as Danae by the metropolitan Zeus, while they did represent the people of the colony. Consequently, in their case, there were no retarding influences, and the impossible character of such government was completely brought out."

The book throws much light upon the history of the mercantile system. While the author is not a defender of that system he fully appreciates the objects which its defenders had in view and the results which were accomplished by adherence to it in the development of the foreign commerce and merchant marine of Great Britain.

Mr. Egerton's study has not given him much enthusiasm for Imperial Federation. He believes that it presents a plan that is neither workable nor capable of producing desirable results. He goes no further than to advocate including representatives of the colonies, the Agents-General, in the Privy Council. Australian Federation is approved, but the obstacles in the way of its achievement are clearly set forth. The union of the Australian governments will probably be achieved in time, and the results of their union will be beneficial to the British Empire.

The book, as a whole, is a valuable contribution to the literature of political science. It is a careful and thorough analysis of the working of British institutions under those conditions which have given them their severest test. In no other field of practical politics have the virtues of English institutions been more carefully tested and with results of which the British nation may be more proud. Although the author says concerning the narrative of British Colonial Policy that "the story has been largely a chronicle of mistakes and failures, sins of omission and commission, for some of which we are suffering to-day," yet, with the exception of the loss of the American colonies in 1783, success has been secured in spite of mistakes and failures, and the prospects of the continuance and more complete unification of the empire in the future are at least encouraging. Mr. Egerton's study has made him in no sense a pessimist; he has full faith that British institutions are to enjoy a future as successful as their past has been.

The book closes with a comprehensive critical bibliography which will be appreciated by all students of the question. The evolution of the British Empire in the future is certain to give increasing importance to the subject of Mr. Egerton's study, and this makes the service which he has rendered to students the greater.

EMORY R. JOHNSON.

Municipal Problems. By FRANK J. GOODNOW, A. M., LL. D. Pp. 321. Price, \$1.50. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1897.

During the past year Professor Goodnow has given us two important contributions to the study of municipal government. The present volume, together with that on "Municipal Home Rule," constitute the first systematic attempt to determine the position of the municipality in our political system. For this reason, if for no other, Professor Goodnow's work deserves an exceptional place in the literature of American political institutions. Notwithstanding the fact that the author is breaking new ground, he shows so